

Frequently Asked Questions about Medicaid Expansion in Nebraska

On November 6, 2018, Initiative 427 was passed by a vote of Nebraska's citizens. The ballot initiative expands the Medicaid population to Nebraskans under the age of 65 whose income is at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level.

Nebraska Medicaid is working with the Heritage Health plans and other stakeholders on establishing and expanding the infrastructure to meet the requirements set out in the measure.

At this time, the Medicaid population and business processes remain as they were prior to the ballot measure being passed.

Below are some question you might have about the expansion of Medicaid in Nebraska. Additionally, in September, Nebraska Medicaid released a document outlining the implementation and cost of Medicaid expansion in Nebraska. This document is available at: <https://tinyurl.com/ybaldycn>.

If you have questions not listed below, please direct them to DHHS.MedicaidExpansionQuestions@nebraska.gov.

What is Medicaid Expansion? / What is Initiative 427?	Citizens voted in favor of Initiative 427, which expands Medicaid eligibility to Nebraska residents under the age of 65, whose income is at or below 138 percent of the federal poverty level. That is an annual income of \$16,753 for an individual and \$34,638 for a household of four in 2018.
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When do I sign up? / Can I sign up now?	<p>At this time, the Medicaid program has not changed. There is not a set date for the implementation of Medicaid expansion in Nebraska. Nebraska Medicaid and the Heritage Health plans are establishing the infrastructure needed to meet the new requirements in the law. There will be more information about enrollment in the future.</p> <p>You might already qualify for Medicaid or are eligible for coverage on the health insurance marketplace. Please go to www.ACCESSNebraska.ne.gov for more information.</p>
What timeline did the bill set?	<p>The initiative states that Nebraska Medicaid is to file a state plan amendment with the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services on or before April 1, 2019. However, the drafting and submission of documents like a state plan amendment (SPA) or a waiver amendment is only one part of implementing Initiative 427. As described below, other considerations include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract amendments with every existing managed care entity; • Changes to state regulation; • Hiring and training of staff; and • Changes to existing information technology systems.
Will Medicaid now cover undocumented immigrants?	No. Undocumented immigrants are not eligible to receive Medicaid except for some emergency services on a limited basis.
I am in a newly eligible group – what should I do next?	You will continue to obtain healthcare services in the way that you currently do until the Medicaid expansion program is implemented.
Please describe the eligibility process for Medicaid now. Will that change?	In order for one's eligibility to be determined, an individual must complete a Medicaid application available online, by phone, or on paper. This process will not change with the addition of the new adult group.
How much is this going to cost Nebraska taxpayers?	Medicaid expansion under the provisions of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act of 2010 is funded 90 percent by the federal government and 10 percent by state funds. Nebraska Medicaid has determined the complete fiscal impact to DHHS through state fiscal year 2029 will increase expenditures by \$5.5 billion, \$669.89 million of that figure coming from state funds.

How do I know if I'm already in an eligible population?	Medicaid is a federal/state program that pays for health care for persons with disabilities, the aged, and low-income children and families. Federal law requires certain services and populations to be covered: poverty-related infants, children, pregnant women, low-income families, elderly and disabled individuals receiving Supplemental Security Income, certain working individuals with disabilities, certain low-income Medicaid enrollees, children with Title IV-E adoption assistance, foster care or guardianship care and children aging out of foster care.
How many people are newly eligible? How many people were already on Medicaid?	<p>MLTC estimates that there will be 93,036 Nebraskans newly eligible. In total, about 240,000 Nebraskans are already on Medicaid.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children comprise 66.8 percent of the current eligible persons by category, • Blind and disabled Nebraskans make up 14.7 percent, the aged 7.7 percent, • Parent/caretaker relatives 10.8 percent. <p>Of expenditures by eligibility of these groups, 26.8 percent is spent on children, 43.2 percent on the blind and disabled, 21.7 on the aged and 8.3 percent on parent/caretaker relatives. Medicaid spending amounts for about 17.1 percent of the state's expenditures.</p>
Are income levels gross or net?	<p>Income for Medicaid expansion eligibility is based upon a person's modified adjusted gross income. To determine this amount, start with your gross income, which is your total taxable income. If you have multiple income streams, add them all together to get your total income. Taxable income may include wages, salaries, or bonuses.</p> <p>You may also be receiving income that is not considered taxable. You do not have to include this income when applying for Medicaid. Types of non-taxable include may include child support, gifts, veterans' benefits, insurance proceeds, beneficiary payments, TANF payments, injury payments, relocation pay, workers' compensation, federal income tax refunds, and SSI payments.</p>
Are college students eligible if they're self-supporting?	College students may be eligible if they meet all necessary Medicaid eligibility requirements including residency, income, citizenship and immigration.
What services are required by federal law?	Services that are mandatory under federal law include inpatient and outpatient hospital services, laboratory and x-ray services, nursing facility services, home health services, nursing services, clinic services, physician services, medical and surgical services of a dentist, nurse practitioner and nurse/midwife services, pregnancy-related services, medical supplies and early and periodic screening and diagnostic treatment for children.

<p>How much is the administrative burden on Nebraska state government going to be?</p>	<p>The 90/10 matching rate is only available for medical services to the expanded population and IT development. Other administrative costs are matched at 75/25 or 50/50.</p> <p>The requirements of Initiative 427, if approved, will require a significant increase in staff for MLTC. Not only will additional staff be required to handle the new regulatory requirements of the expanded Medicaid population, but new staff must also be hired to handle eligibility determinations and questions regarding benefits from the public. The recruitment and training of this additional staff must be factored into the timeline for implementing Initiative 427.</p> <p>For the eligibility field staff (those employees who will process applications and determine eligibility for the expansion population), it is estimated 36 additional staff will have to be in place on the implementation date. It will take six months to recruit and train this staff. Additional eligibility staff will be hired as enrollment increases.</p> <p>By State Fiscal Year 2029, it is estimated 95 additional staff will be required if the state's economic condition remains stable. The general fund estimated cost for new staff will be \$26,036,313 for the full 10-year analysis. The total fund cost will be \$52,072,627.</p>
<p>Where can we find a copy of the legislation/ ballot measure about Medicaid expansion?</p>	<p>http://www.sos.ne.gov/elec/2018/pdf/medicaid-expansion-petition.pdf</p>
<p>When is the expansion slated to go live (according to the ballot measure)?</p>	<p>There is no go-live date in the ballot measure.</p>
<p>Does the ballot measure need action from the legislature to implement the ballot measure?</p>	<p>Implementation of Medicaid expansion will require an appropriation from the Nebraska legislature.</p>

About how many people are estimated to be in the Medicaid expansion population?	The Division of Medicaid and Long-Term Care (MLTC) estimates that over ten years, there will be 93,036 new people enrolled in Nebraska Medicaid.
Is the Medicaid expansion linked to work and community engagement requirements? If so, what sub-populations might be exempted?	There is no language in the ballot initiative linking the Medicaid expansion program to work and/or community engagement activities.
When will the plan be submitted to CMS? Is CMS approval required to move forward?	The ballot initiative requires a plan to be submitted to CMS by April 1, 2019. In order to receive federal matching funds, the Medicaid expansion program must be approved by CMS.